



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS
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FOUNDER
Mrs. Sybil Brand

CHAIRPERSON
Mrs. Eleanor R. Montaña

VICE CHAIRPERSON
Mr. Frank S. Bacio

Ms. Barbara Bigby
Mr. Vito Cannella
Ms. Rita Hall
Mr. John A. Hammargren
Mr. Carl E. Moore

MINUTES OF THE **SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS** **MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING** **JULY 16, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Montaña called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chair Montaña led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Chair Eleanor R. Montaña
Vice Chair Frank Bacio
Vito Cannella
Rita Hall
John A. Hammargren

Excused Absence

Barbra Bigby
Carl Moore

Others Present

Commander Dave Fender, Sheriff's Department
Michael Cooper, Probation Department
Barbara Butler, Department of Children and Family Services
Dorothy Channel, Department of Children and Family Services
Elizabeth Howard, Department of Children and Family Services
Carla Carr, Department of Auditor-Controller
Timothy Braden, Internal Services Department

Staff

Janice Davis, Commission Services Staff
Garen Khachian, Commission Services Staff

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Chair Montaña welcomed everyone for attending the meeting and requested that Department Representatives introduce themselves.

Sheriff's Department:

Commander Dave Fender began by distributing the "Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Sybil Brand Commission Inmate on Inmate and Inmate on Staff Assaults Report 2006-2008" and then reported the following:

- The total Number of complaints involving force in 2007 was three (3), after investigation, two (2) of the three complaints were founded and one was (1) unfounded.
- The total number of complaints involving force in 2008 was four (4), after investigation all four (4) were unfounded.
- In 2007 there were 139 complaints against staff, 75% of those complaints were unfounded.
- In 2008 the complaints against staff was reduced by 34%.
- Since 2006 violence in women's jails has been increasing.

Probation Department:

Mr. Michael Cooper reported to the Commission:

- Mid Valley Group Home voluntarily closed as of June 30, 2008, the youth have been relocated.
- One (1) physical abuse allegation at Mid Valley Group Home and one (1) sexual abuse allegation at Boys Republic Group Home were reported for the month of June 2008.
- The number of AWOL cases was 148 for the month of June 2008.
- Two (2) complaints were filed by group home youths against staff, one (1) at Ettie Lee Group Home and one (1) at Sunshine Group Home.
- A youth from Leroy Boys Group Home was AWOL for seven (7) days, returned to the group home and committed suicide.
- One suicide was committed by a youth in juvenile hall.

Department of Children and Family Services:

- Ms. Elizabeth Howard introduced Ms. Barbara Butler as the new manager for the Group Home Division and then reported the following, for the period of June 1, 2008 - July 15, 2008:
- Alannah Group Home has voluntarily closed both homes as of June 30, 2008.
- Jean Lores Group Home is planning to voluntarily close as of July 30, 2008.
- The reported number of physical abuse cases was 13.
- The number of sexual abuse cases was 4.
- The number of general neglect cases was 8.
- The number of runaways from group homes was 329.
- There have been no group home closures since the June 18, 2008 Sybil Brand Commission meeting.
- The Camry Group Home was placed on the "Do Not Refer list".

Ms. Dorothy Channel gave the following report:

- The DCFS All Stars Director's Employee Recognition Award was given to Mr. Guy Trimarchi for his dedication to hard work.
- Mr. Rene Howard, a group home youth who at age 16 quit school to search for his ailing birth mom; won a conditional football scholarship to the University of Miami for next year, thanks to support from the Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council.
- Los Angeles schools are working to improve the graduation rate for foster youths.

Department of Auditor-Controller:

Ms. Carla Carr gave the following report:

The following "Group Homes Corrective Action Plans" have been fully implemented:

- Fleming and Barne Dimondale Adolescent Group Homes
- Carson, Hawthorne and Lancaster Sites Group Homes
- Crittenden Orange County; Valley View Site Group Homes

Department of Mental Health: No representative was present.

Internal Services Department:

Mr. Timothy Braden gave the following report:

Mr. Michael Henderson, Division Manager of Maintenance and Operations will attend the next Business meeting.

Parking issues for the Sybil Brand Commission have been resolved at the following court houses, Criminal Courts Building, Edelman Children's Court and the Men's Central Jail; the LAC Medical Center parking issues are still being discussed.

Community Care Licensing Division: No representative was present.

APPROVAL OF JULY 9, 2008 MEETING MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Cannella, seconded by Vice Chair Bacio, and unanimously carried, the minutes of June 11, 2008 were approved with no changes.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Montaña reported on the following (9) articles:

- "Report Criticizes County's Structure", Los Angeles Times, July 3, 2008, regarding new layer of managers is creating gridlock in the County's reporting structure.
- "Officer Killed In Off-Duty Accident", Daily Breeze, July 10, 2008, regarding an off-duty Los Angeles County Police lieutenant, killed Wednesday, July 9, 2008 when his SUV slammed into a disabled minivan on the Pomona Freeway, also killing an 18 year old man.
- "Off-Duty Officer, Man Die In Crash", Los Angeles Times, July 10, 2008, regarding a 55 year old off-duty police officer and an 18 year old male who were killed early Wednesday, July 9, 2008 in a crash on the Pomona Freeway.
- "Jury Scolds County For Luxury Cars", Daily Breeze, July 11, 2008, regarding some county officials driving vehicles worth \$50,000 at taxpayers' expense. County employees were involved in 830 accidents in 2005-06, which cost taxpayers \$607 million.
- "Custody Deaths Cost Taxpayers Millions", Daily Breeze, July 12, 2008, regarding death and injuries to people in custody in Los Angeles County jails which continue to cost the county millions of dollars in lawsuit settlements.
- "Jail Care for Women Is Criticized", Los Angeles Times, July 12, 2008, regarding female inmates in the Los Angeles County jail system waiting weeks, even months before receiving requested medical care.

- “Criminal Histories No Barrier”, Los Angeles Times, July 15, 2008, regarding the County of Los Angeles to take disciplinary actions against employees who did not disclose criminal offenses.
- “County Suspends Clinic Workers”, Los Angeles Times, July 16, 2008, regarding sixteen employees at Martin Luther King Jr. Harbor Hospital’s outpatient clinic who have been suspended after it was discovered that they had serious crimes in their past.
- “More Hospital Horrors”, Daily Breeze, July 16, 2008, regarding Martin Luther King Jr.-Harbor Hospital employees with criminal records who were allowed to keep working.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Commissioner Bacio reported the current balance of the Commission’s Charitable Fund is \$1,927.83.

STAFF REPORT

- Ms. Janice Davis, Staff, Commission Services, extended an invitation to the Commissioners on behalf of the Arts Commission to attend a concert entitled “Afro Blue” on August 1, 2008, at 8:30 p.m. at the John Anson Ford Theatre.

DISCUSSION ON GOD NOT GUNS PROGRAM

Commissioner Hall distributed information on the “God Not Guns Initiative”, which seeks to raise the awareness of the gun violence as a spiritual and moral crisis. The project is designed to engage faith communities from every sector to work toward a peaceable society where all children have the opportunity to grow and prosper, and where everyone can live without fear of being cut down by firearm violence.

DISCUSSION ON SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

The Commission was advised that the Supervisorial Districts will be notifying staff as soon as a date has been determined for the Scholarship Presentations during a Board of Supervisors Meeting.

QUALITY AND PRODCUTIVITY COMMISSION 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

This item deferred to the August 13, 2008 meeting.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT 2007

Commissioner Hammargren stated that the report is an extensive study that focuses on several key issues and gives specific details on how phone calls are abused by inmates in jails; it highlights studies that were done on the finances that go to inmate’s funds and stated that 80% of children in foster homes will end up in jails.

INSPECTION OF YOUTH FACILITIES AND JAILS IN NORTHWEST AREA

Chair Montano listed all the group home facilities that have not been inspected in the last two years and assigned several of the facilities to each Commissioner. The Lancaster and High Desert facilities will be inspected by a group of the Commissioners inspecting at least (5) facilities at the same time, who will carpool to save on costs.

CORRESPONDENCE/AUDIT REPORTS

Commissioner Cannella reported the following:

- “Jail Care for Women Is Criticized”, Los Angeles Times, July 12, 2008, regarding female inmates in the Los Angeles County jail system waiting weeks, even months before receiving requested medical care.

FACILITY/GROUP HOME INSPECTION REPORTS FROM JULY 9, 2008 TO JULY 15, 2008

Little People World #3 – 34, #4 – Commissioner Bacio

The facility was visited on June 26, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Areas of Concern: Individual Rights and Chores needs to be posted; smoke alarm in bedroom #1 is not working; fire extinguishers need to be recharged.

Hillsides Home For Children (Girls Satellite) – 28, #4 – Commissioners Bigby and Cannella

The facility was visited on July 10, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Areas of Concern: Bedrooms are disorganized and need cleaning; Needs and Services Plan needs to be at site not in the main office site.

Street Academy (Brown Star) – 57, #2 – Commissioners Hall and Moore

The facility was visited on July 14, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concern: Low on snacks.

Girls and Boys Town (Boys Town So. Ca. Ercc) – 23, #2 – Commissioners Hammargren and Montaño

The facility was visited on July 14, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concern: First aid kit needs restocking.

United American Indian Involvement (Ah-No-Ven) – 60, #5 – Commissioners Hammargren and Montaño

The facility was visited on July 15, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concern: Needs emergency plan and emergency telephone numbers to be posted.

Little People World #1 – 34, #3 – Commissioner Bacio

The facility was visited on July 15, 2008, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Human Services Network (Shadow Hills) – 30, #4 – Commissioner Cannella

The facility was visited on July 15, 2008, and found to be in poor condition.

Areas of Concern: Backyard needs watering; no power in the kitchen; bathroom shower area needs cleaning; bedrooms are disorganized and needs cleaning.

NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (To be presented and placed on a future agenda)

There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Montaña adjourned the meeting at 12:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice A. Davis
Commission Services Division